



# Isabella Thoburn College

*Lal Bagh, Lucknow, India*

Opened as a one-room schoolhouse in 1870. Advanced to High School grade, 1884, affiliated as a College of the University of Allahabad, through the B. A. Course, 1886.

On the great Gangetic Plain of North India, on the high road of the old Mohammedan conquests, there lies Lucknow, a city of 300,000, which was the capital of the last independent kingdom of the Moghul Empire, before the Sepoy Mutiny and the British annexation of 1856-1857. The Lord Treasurer of this Kingdom lived on an estate in Lucknow known as Lal Bagh, literally, Ruby Garden or Treasure Garden, since a ruby, usually of extraordinary value, is characteristic of buried treasure in India. Shortly after the Mutiny the property was purchased from a member of the Treasurer's family by an American missionary, Isabella Thoburn, who has since been recognized as the pioneer of women's education in the Orient. Under Isabella Thoburn, Lal Bagh became Treasure Ground for the Kingdom of God in India. It is the story of this latter period of its history that this little book tells.

This booklet is one of a series of seven describing the Women's Union Christian Colleges in the Orient and published by the Joint Committee on these colleges. The ten cooperating Women's Boards of Foreign Missions in America provide the maintenance but are unable to secure land and buildings which rapid growth has made necessary. All are in temporary crowded quarters.

The Trustees of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund have promised approximately a million dollars toward the three millions required. This conditional pledge must be met before January 1, 1923. If the story of this adventure in International Friendship and the appeal for aid seem important to you will you not send your check or pledge to the Assistant Treasurer of the Joint Committee, Miss Hilda L. Olson, 300 Ford Building, Boston, Mass., or to the Treasurer of your own Woman's Board of Foreign Missions, designating a special college or building if you desire.

# Isabella Thoburn College

*Lal Bagh, Lucknow*

*India*

## The Palm Song

*(Selected Lines)*

We linger in the twilight shade  
And plant for years to be  
This palm beloved of India's soil,  
Our Class Memorial Tree.

Clasp to thy bosom, Mother Earth,  
And take it to thy care.  
Yield to its tenderness we pray,  
Thy bounties rich and rare.

Above its graceful, waving crown  
Let wholesome breezes play,  
And let thy sunshine gloss its leaves  
With every passing day.

For like the palm we too aspire  
For India's weal to live,  
And of all good that comes to us,  
*As we receive to give.*



### A REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA'S WOMANHOOD

Miss Lilavati Singh, M. A., Acting President of the Isabella Thoburn College, who died in Chicago in 1909 after thirty-one years of association with the college as teacher and pupil. A native of India but a master of the English language, she was the first woman to sit on a world committee, having been president of the Woman's Section of the World Student Christian Federation. In this capacity she lectured in Japan, in various countries of Western Europe and in the United States. (See Page 11.)

*I*

**YESTERDAY—1870 TO 1920.** The Isabella Thoburn College can look back on a half century of growth, for although its affiliation as a college dates only from 1886, it is the outgrowth of a school which was opened sixteen years before in a mud-walled room in a bazar of Lucknow, when Miss Thoburn gathered together six children for her first experiment in organizing a school in India. One class was added to another, and soon a boarding department became a necessity. After several make-shifts Miss Thoburn purchased for \$10,000.00 the nine-acre estate known as Lal Bagh, which has been the home of the school and college ever since. The poorly planned residence of the Lord Treasurer, who had lived on this estate, was remodeled and added to from time to time till a beautiful building, suitable for college purposes, began to emerge. Overcrowding, however, led to the erection in 1910 of the Hazzard Memorial Building, with accommodations for lecture rooms and science laboratories, a large study hall, and, at one end, a dormitory with accommodations for thirty students. This building immediately became greatly beloved by the students and though very quickly outgrown, it was a sad loss and a veritable shock to all when in September of 1915, it collapsed during a cloudburst and flood. Verandahs, bedrooms, and even corners of the garden and of the roof terrace, were used for classrooms; the laboratories of the High School were, to mutual disadvantage, shared with the College; dormitory space was so limited, as was also accommodations for teachers, that a distinct falling off in enrolment was noticeable, and it was impossible to offer more than a narrow range of courses.

But the "Lal Bagh spirit" shone undimmed, and with face forward eagerly looked and worked for a better day.

**T**ODAY—1920 TO 1921. Lal Bagh's approaching Jubilee (1870-1920) was a challenge to her throughout those dark and discouraging days of 1915-1919. Her kind and devoted sponsors in America entered enthusiastically into the idea of making the Jubilee the opening of a new era. A campaign was authorized which, with conditional gifts from Government, brought in some \$100,000. In India there was great happiness in the effort to find and purchase a new site whereon to build the larger Lal Bagh that the times and the new conditions in India demanded. At this juncture a new opportunity afforded itself. The Government of India decided to organize a great University of Lucknow, which should be "an Oxford for India." As plans have developed the Isabella Thoburn College has the privilege of being the woman's department of that University. It is difficult to estimate all that this means, but one thing is sure,—the education of women in this great Province of 50 million people of North India will be moulded by the Christian ideals and the educational policies of the American missionaries at Lal Bagh,—a fact which is as truly God's service as was the opening of the little bazar school in 1870. This opportunity has led to reconsideration of sites and plans, until now an enlargement of the present site and the taking over by the College of the present High School buildings seems the best immediate plan. This will be the "Intermediate College," while University classes will be provided for in connection with the Government University just opened (March, 1921). With those bright prospects Lal Bagh has celebrated her jubilee and entered upon her second half century confident that "He who formed, will lead."



### III

**T**OMORROW. If there were not such a college as Lal Bagh, the foreshadowings of a great Tomorrow in India would demand its creation. It is needed:

- (1) for training native leadership in this age when all India is demanding *Indian* leadership, along all lines, and is impatient of foreign control.
- (2) for developing Christian workers for the multitudes in India who are turning to Christianity and need care and shepherding in schools and in all phases of daily life.
- (3) for the education of those who will be the homemakers of their country, that the stamp of Christianity may be upon the minds and lives of mothers and wives in this New India.
- (4) for moralizing the social life in India which otherwise would have the bias of an increasingly disproportionate educated male population.
- (5) for demonstrating the uplifting influence of Christ upon that sex which has been so disastrously ignored and repressed in India, and for proving that the best is none too good for Indian womanhood. "Better women," are the strongest factor in the development of a Better India.
- (6) for definitely distributing the ideals of Christian womanhood to all parts of Southern Asia from which the College draws its students. Personal witness to the value of Christian education for women in a real Kingdom message.
- (7) for training women to take their part in the new national life of awakened India. This training must be by contact with lives already devoted to Christ, more than by precept, for "character is caught, not taught."
- (8) for meeting the needs of the more educated classes of India, as the evangelistic and other parts of mission work minister specifically to the needs of the masses.

To state these needs is to indicate the place Lal Bagh will fill in the future, for it is evident to all who know and love her, that she enters the morrow ready to serve the great need of the day—if her friends will keep faith with her in this hour of far-reaching impulse and endeavor.

# The Home Beautiful

Its old vine-covered gateway, bespeaking "Welcome" and "Come Again."

Its Grassy Oval, around which are flowering trees, and the driveway where all Lal Baghites love to "take a turn around the lawn."

Its tennis and badminton courts, around which so many pleasant gatherings have taken place, notably "Tuesday Tennis," throughout the years. Its basket ball and all its healthy recreations.

Its old Kothi with its untold secrets of treasure and romance, its new additions and its manifold associations.

The Clock Tower, which has pealed its lesson of punctuality with few intermissions for 35 years.

Its Assembly Hall and Zenana Gallery where gatherings grave and gay have honoured and been honoured by it.

Its Dining Room where Plain Living and High Thinking have graced our life, and where there has been perennial Feast of Reason and Flow of Soul.

The Drawing Room which has been the center of hundreds of concentric circles of influence and activity which now spread from shore to shore.

Its Taikhana, with its legends of Cobras guarding the Buried Treasure.

Its Hostel, with memories which lead us back to Lal Bagh's infant days. The Hostel with its baby jewels and childish happiness, its girlhood beauty and youthful hopes. The Hostel whence come peals of laughter that help keep old age a stranger to Lal Bagh.

The School House, with its message of Order and Usefulness, Faithfulness and Comradeship.

The Ruins, with their appeal, their memories, their challenge.



The Servants' Quarters, with their domestic joys and tragedies, and the contribution of willing and good service.

The Home Beautiful, with its atmosphere of simplicity, love and service.

Our Goodly Heritage of faith, hope and love.

"This House for God": "That in all things He may have the Pre-eminence."

The "globe-trotter," whose name is legion, and whose surname is Delightful as often as it is Frightful.

Our Friends: "we greet them hand and heart."

Conferences,—our liberal education.

Our Motto, "WE RECEIVE TO GIVE," with its variations, grave and gay.

Ourselves,—a motley crew, who revel in *bon camaraderie*, in scholastic adventures, in the Research Magnificent.



The parlor at Lal Bagh where the home life of the college centers. Before the purchase of the property in 1872 it was used as the Audience Room of the Treasurer of the Mogul Kingdom of which Lucknow is the Capital. Since then it has served as the starting place of many a missionary enterprise now influential in North India.

## The College Curriculum

The College Course is a four years' Course, leading, as in American colleges, to the B. A. degree; but it is intensive rather than extensive and the range of subjects offered is narrow compared to that of an American college. Hence, in several cases, students who had completed the course in India and who wished to study further in America, have found it profitable to enter the third year in an American college, even though in some subjects (notably Mathematics) their work in India would have been in advance of third year work here. When we remember that the student in India takes the whole course in English which is not her mother-tongue, and which is often unheard by her except in the college itself, it is remarkable that she is able to grasp her subject so thoroughly. It is not uncommon for women students to head the list of hundreds of successful candidates the large majority of whom are men, and it is a well-known fact that the students of Lal Bagh have a breadth and practical knowledge gained by the all-round education afforded by the Isabella Thoburn College, which the majority of men students in the Province may well envy. While the College has been small in numbers, it has never lowered scholastic standards, and has sought to adapt its curriculum to the after-college lives of its students. Consequently its graduates, now scattered all over Southern Asia, have made the name of Lal Bagh synonymous with scholarship so related to character and service as to give the most creditable interpretation to the College motto, WE RECEIVE TO GIVE.

### *Extra-curricular Activities*

Aside from many beautiful traditions and occasions of sentiment and fun and fellowship, which make for a uniquely delightful family life in this diversified community, there are numerous activities which are voluntarily engaged in and which form a most important part of training for leadership, as well as in developing *esprit de corps* among a body of

students composed of many races and several creeds. The Y. W. C. A. is foremost in its comprehensive programmes and opportunities for initiative and usefulness; the Students' Organization is essential to the self-respect and orderliness of the students' body; the City Sunday Schools which reach four or five hundred children in various parts of the city each Sabbath, give the taste for direct service in the most needy places which later leads the girls out into the difficult and needy places of India; the lectures which are provided weekly bring to the attention of the students the subjects which are engaging the world's thought; the supplementary courses in music, hygiene (with correlated physical exercises), Girls' Club organization, Home Nursing and First Aid, all help to enrich and make resourceful lives that will inevitably be thrown on their own resources very largely after leaving the sheltered life of Lal Bagh. There is no part of a woman's nature that does not have some opportunity for growth and culture under the influences of this Alma Mater, and best of all is the influence of personality in the examples of consecrated womanhood which are represented by Miss Thoburn herself and her associates. Lives thus lighted will undoubtedly have a large share in dispelling the sombre darkness of India.



Psychology Class—Studying a Model of the Human Brain



SARASVATI SINGH  
Goucher 1910

# Alumnae as Pioneers

## *Lal Bagh Records Show the Following:*

The first Kindergarten in India.

The first college in India with full staff of women and residence accommodation.

The first Arya Samaj B. A. graduate.

The F. Sc. graduate who became the second woman with the B. Sc. degree in India.

The F. Sc. graduate who later graduated at the foremost Medical college in North India as the first Mohammedan woman Doctor in India and probably in the world.

The first woman B. A. and the first Normal School graduate from Rajputana.

The first woman to receive her M. A. in North India.

The first Mohammedan woman to take her F. A. examination from the Central Provinces.

Probably the first F. A. student to take her examination in pardah.

The first Teachers Conference (held annually) in India.

The first woman's College to offer the F. Sc. course.

The first college to have on its staff an Indian lady.

The first woman (Lilavati Singh) from the Orient to serve on a world's Committee.

The first woman dentist.

The first woman agriculturist.

The first woman in India to be in charge of a Boys' High School.

A Lal Bagh graduate organized the Home Missionary Society which has developed into an agency of great service to the neglected Anglo-Indian community scattered throughout India.

The Lal Bagh student who took an agricultural course in America is now helping convert wastes of the Himalaya regions into fruitful valleys.

Miss Phoebe Rowe, an Anglo-Indian who was associated with Lal Bagh in Miss Thoburn's time, was a wonderful influence in the villages of North India and carried the Christian message by her beautiful voice as well as her consecrated personality. She traveled in America, endearing India to many friends here. She is one—perhaps the most remarkable, however—of many Lal Bagh daughters who are serving as evangelists in far-away places.



The Main Building



Lal Bagh Girls on Ruins of the Building which Collapsed During the Floods of 1915. How they Rise from Disaster!



## Lal Bagh's Foremost Daughter— Lilavati Singh

No one will deny this title to Lilavati Singh. The mischievous school-girl yielding her converted enthusiasms to Christ for India, the eighteen-year-old High School graduate who in 1886 urged Miss Thoburn to open a Woman's College; the ardent college student who two years later went to Calcutta to finish two more years of work in order to obtain the B. A. degree; the young teacher in the Government School at Dacca whose devotion to the ideal of doing her most and best for India's women led her back into distinctly Christian service; the Christian College teacher, yielding heart and mind and soul and strength to a service whose incense was wafted the world over,—these are some chapters in her life up to her thirtieth year. Then she was led out into still larger spheres. As Chairman of the Woman's Department of the World's Christian Student Federation, she traveled among students in Japan, France, Holland, Belgium, Sweden, England and America, interpreting the call of India to those in more favored countries and the contribution India may be expected to make to the world's ideals and activities. She endeared the womanhood of India, personified in herself, to the womanhood of America. Of her, an ex-president of the United States said, after hearing her speak to an audience of 10,000 people, "If this was the only result of the money spent on missions, she would justify the expense!" But with it all, her heart beat true to India, its simple needs and claims, and in between her two trips to America, she made vital contributions in the capacity of Associate Principal, Professor of Philosophy and History, and Preceptress of the Boarding School, thus reaching the girls of all ages, from kindergarten to B. A. In the meantime she took the M. A. degree in Philosophy. In 1909, during a visit to America with the object of raising money for a new school Hostel, she died, and was buried in America by loving friends there, as Isabella Thoburn was buried by Indian friends in Lucknow.

# Alumnae

## A TYPICAL ILLUSTRATION OF THEIR INFLUENCE THE MESSAGE OF A COLLEGE CAP AND GOWN

A graduate of Lal Bagh was living at home, keeping house for her widowed father, a prominent Government Collector, in a large town in North India. She was anxious to share the opportunities she had had with the women of that city who were not only ignorant and superstitious but who, in so many cases among the high born, were shut away in seclusion because of the custom of *pardah* which prohibits women appearing in public. She asked her father's help in organizing a club for such women, and his suggestion was to begin with a gathering at their home when every effort would be made to keep their customs unviolated. Arrangements were made for utter seclusion from men, and with the promise of this a number of families consented to allow their women to attend. The father suggested to his daughter to wear her college cap and gown, and though she felt it would be rather inappropriate among such ignorant women she followed his advice. To her surprise, one woman immediately remarked on it for, though utterly illiterate herself, the men of her family were well-educated and were possessors of college degrees. The woman expressed surprise that a cap and gown just like those her sons wore could be worn by a woman, and there was great excitement when it was told that it stood for the same learning as in the case of men. Before she knew it, our college graduate was setting forth what education had meant to her, and she had called forth decided response from the women whose own lives had so little in them, when one crusty dame exclaimed, "After all, what is the use of education? See, she is not even married!"

This might have fallen as a damper on the newly aroused enthusiasm of the women, had not the girl been able to tell



them that it so happened that she was engaged to a young college graduate who was at that time working to get sufficient money to start a home with her, and she hoped to make her education of practical use in her home. She was able incidentally to give a blow to the dowry system, which is the cause of so much misery in Indian homes, and to uplift ideals of married life. But another woman sighed, "That is all very well for you to talk about, but our children are married so young, what can they do to have such homes as you speak of?" The girl eagerly replied, though she had not meant to touch on this subject at the first meeting, that her own grandmother and great grandmother had been under just such conditions, but that the acceptance of Christianity had brought with it better things for the girls of the family, and that was why she had the privileges she had. Thus, in that one gathering, she had been able to make a plea for education of girls, for higher marriage ideals, for resistance to dowry and child-marriage customs, and for the acceptance of that which opened the way for woman's greatest good—the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In various ways, this experience is being repeated wherever girls go forth from the college. Can we refuse to think of the College Cap and Gown as a missionary message when it can stand for such things and convey such lessons?



The Punjabi Carol—The Glee Club

## Financial History

It was natural that in the early days of the Institution the steps of progress were so gradual that there was little budgeting, and appeals were made for money only to meet emergencies or outstanding needs. In a land where female illiteracy was more than 99 per cent, a college had to prove itself step by step before it would be justified in taking any great forward leap. At first ambition did not soar beyond remodeling of existing buildings and additions to them, but later whole new buildings were ventured on, erected in the form of wings to the original buildings. These were promptly outgrown as soon as built, but except for over-crowding they formed a serviceable group, and the addition of a large audience hall with a "zenana gallery" provided with slit screens for Indian ladies obliged to observe seclusion in public, made the plant of use to the community as well as the college family. Up to 1915 the purchase and erection of land and buildings had cost not more than \$100,000, of which the school department used at least half. Between 1915 and the present time three special factors have demanded foresight and energy in meeting the compelling needs of a future,—the flood of 1915, which caused the collapse of the Hazzard Memorial, the urgent need of providing more adequately for the demands of women's education, and the opening of Lucknow University. The Jubilee of Lal Bagh served to focus the attention of friends in India and America on these parts. The present effort for raising money is the outgrowth of these facts and it is estimated that another \$400,000 will be necessary for completing the plans relating to immediate need.

Every dollar given to work of this kind means a positive step toward the time when India will be able to serve itself, for the Christianizing of India's subjugated womanhood is a strategic point in her self-realization and in her conquest by Christ. Heretofore gifts for the Isabella Thoburn College have been chiefly in small amounts, evincing the multitude of

friends the institution can call hers. But it is not unreasonable to hope that in these critical days some one or some few may feel the appeal to *large* gifts which shall allow the work to assume the form and proportions that God is evidently expecting of it.

A parable told by the Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, may help to call forth the response which the Giver of Good Gifts Himself can bless.

A beggar sat by the wayside eagerly awaiting the coming-by of the King whose royal route was being heralded in advance. As the procession drew near and the royal coach came into sight, the beggar held out his hand to receive of the kingly bounty. To his astonishment, the king leaned forward from the coach with *his* hand outstretched for a gift, and the beggar, inwardly resentful, searched in his wallet for a tiny kernel of grain which he gave the king. Amazed, angered, increasingly resentful, he sat all day in disappointed perplexity. At night, when he came to count his gains of the day, he found in his wallet a tiny kernel of gold. Then he wished with his whole heart that he had given all he had to the king.



A Day in the Park

# Interesting Summaries

## *College and Normal School Alumnae*

### **Total Number Recorded 255**

<b>B. A. Graduates</b> .....	<b>52</b>
<b>Intermediate Graduates</b> .....	<b>141</b>
<b>Normal School Alumnae</b> .....	<b>99</b>
<b>Junior Normal Alumnae</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Teachers</b> .....	<b>180</b>
<b>Inspectresses of Schools</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Doctors and Medical Students</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>(of whom now practicing 12 and Dentist 1)</b>	
<b>Agriculturists</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Alumnae who have studied in advance of degree obtained of Lal Bagh</b> .....	<b>88</b>
<b>Studied Abroad</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Alumnae Married</b> .....	<b>62</b>

Religious and Church Denominations: Episcopal, 86; Methodist Episcopal, 67; Presbyterian, 39; Roman Catholic, 5; Disciples of Christ, 1; Baptist, 1; Brahmo Somaj, 9; Hindu, 5; Mohammedan, 6; Argo Somaj, 2.

Racial Distribution: Indian, 115; Anglo-Indian, 88; English, 7; Eurasian, 5; American, 2; Armenian, 2.

Geographical Distribution: Burma, 3; Straits Settlement, 3; Ceylon, 2; Persia, 3; India, 244. (United Provinces, Panjat, Bengal, Bombay, Central Provinces, Central India, Dekkan, Kashmir, Assam, Madras, Sindh, Nepal, N. W. Frontier.

# A Ruined Building

## at Isabella Thoburn College

### Lucknow



Caused by the Floods of 1905

*Who Will Replace It?*

## The Master's Garden

'Tis the Master's garden of beauty now,  
An orchard of pleasant fruits;  
As He walks in its shade at the cool of day  
With a voice of approval we hear him say—  
    "Blessed is she  
Who trains these human flowers for me."

Once it brought forth only briers and thorns,  
No plant of beauty was here,  
No shade where the Master could love to rest,  
No roses to fasten upon His breast.  
    He turned His face  
In grief away from the wasted place.

Now He looks with joy on the tender vines  
And blesses the gardener's care;  
And His winds of providence send abroad  
Over desolate waste and dusty road  
    A fragrance rare  
From his purchased garden of roses fair.

As He passes among the beds of bloom,  
A touch of His gentle hand  
Breaks now and again from the parent stem  
From among the buds the fairest of them—  
    But not to die,  
His touch giveth life eternally.  
Awake O! thou north wind, and come thou south,

For lo! the winter is past.  
Awake ye, and over His garden blow  
That the spices thereof may outward flow,  
    And fruit most sweet  
Be found when the Master comes to eat.

'Tis blessed to work in thy garden, Lord,  
Give even to me a share!  
When thou comest in at the close of day  
May the word be for me, when thou shalt say,  
    "Blessed is she  
Who trains these human flowers for me."

E. J. K.

Newark, N. J.

COOPERATING BOARDS

Methodist Episcopal

Presbyterian U. S. A.





## Isabella Thoburn College

*From our gateways have gone forth:*

- 179** High School Students who have taken the College Entrance Course.
- 99** Students who have taken the Teacher Training Course.
- 141** Students who have taken the Intermediate College Course.
- 60** Students who have taken the Bachelor of Arts Course.

*And this is what these students have  
later done:*

- 228** Became teachers (149 of them in Mission Schools).
- 5** Became evangelists.
- 18** Became doctors.
- 95** Entered homes of their own.
- 114** Entered upon further study (14 abroad).